

DETAILED ACTION

Interview Summary

In an interview with Mr. Sam Borodach, attorney of record, on 8/12/05, it was agreed that the limitation in all the independent claims "injection means for continuously pressure-ejecting raw fluid and gas during a filtration process from a central portion of said plurality of hollow fiber ..." invoked 35 USC 112 sixth paragraph, and accordingly, this limitation would cover only the corresponding structure, material, or acts described in the specification and equivalents thereof. The injection means thus would be the tube (7) with holes (7a and 7b), inserted through the opening of the funnel member (3a) from the bottom of the housing (2), and which carries gas and raw fluid.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2,4,5,7,9-11 and 13-17; are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The closest references are JP-07-060074, Zha (US 6,156,200) and JP-04-110023 A. None of these references, singly or in combination, teach "the injection means for continuously pressure-ejecting raw fluid and gas during the filtration process from a central portion of the hollow fibers" in combination with the funnel member and the recovery chamber as claimed, when 35 USC 112, sixth paragraph is invoked by the means-plus-function limitation to define the injection means as what is disclosed in the specification.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

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accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Krishnan S. Menon whose telephone number is 571-272-1143. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wanda L. Walker can be reached on 571-272-1151. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Krishnan S. Menon
Patent Examiner
8/13/05


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